

Friendship Heights TMD Advisory Committee  
Meeting Summary, April 8, 2008.

Items 1,2,&3—Introductions, Review and Approval of March Meeting Minutes, & Chair's Comments: Members and guests went around the room and introduced themselves. Minutes from the March meeting were approved with no changes. Ken Hartman was approved by the County Council on March 18, and is now a member of the Committee. Robert Schwartzbart, newly elected Chair, congratulated Committee Member Jeffery Slavin on his recent landslide election victory as Mayor of the Town of Somerset. Mr. Schwartzbart thanked the Committee for all of their contributions to date, and after giving a bit of background about his professional career, stated that he looked forward to continuing to collaborate with everyone as the chair.

Item 4—Taxi Stand: Howard Benn had not yet arrived, so we moved on to Item 5.

Item 5—Wisconsin Ave Pedestrian Safety: Barbara Taubin discussed some of the issues her committee has noticed over time, and some recommendations on how to mitigate the issues.

Item 4 Revisited – Taxi Stand: Mr. Schwartzbart reminded the group that on March 18, Leslie Olsen, Jim Carlson, Leonard Grant, and Mr. Schwartzbart were invited to speak to Taxi Representatives. Mr. Benn chaired that meeting, and was in turn invited to speak to us.

Mr. Benn discussed the concerns of the Taxicab Advisory Committee. These include:

- Taxis will not operate without a stand.
- The Taxi Commission does not want a taxi stand on Willard
- The Willard stand will be closing (expected in early May), and the taxis will likely move to the Circle, at least temporarily.
- There will be two taxis on the circle.

Jim Able, representing Barwood said that being visible is very important to taxi drivers. He does believe that placing the taxis on the Circle is good for both the passengers and the taxi drivers.

Art Holmes has taken all of this into consideration, and has decided that the taxi stand will move back to the Circle in early May.

Back to Item 5: Ms. Taubin continued discussing the main problem that her committee found regarding pedestrian safety. The crux of the problem is that there are too many signals. Other problems include lack of dedicated turn signals, motorists performing illegal U-turns, and cars running lights. Ms. Taubin also believes that the more recommendations that can be given, even as laypeople, the better.

Steve Robins thanked Ms. Taubin for being so thorough, but brought up the following points:

- He is not sure how to specifically define the problem
- The intersection is very complex, so even if a few recommendations can be made, no one in this room understands the engineering/timing/technical issues involved
- While motorists are often to blame, some pedestrians are just as careless

Mr. Schwartzbart believes that these issues must be compressed so we can focus on the key issues. In the next few months, the group will be inviting representatives from SHA.

Item 6—Updates: Jim Carlson said that Bike to Work Day will be on May 16. He also mentioned that in the County's proposed budget, the Super Fare Share program in Friendship Heights has been cut. The reason for this is that the TMD does not collect any parking revenues to help offset the cost. This is only proposed at this point, and the County Council will vote in mid May. Mr. Slavin moved to write a letter to the Council requesting to keep the Fare Share program. Motion was seconded and carried, by a vote of 8-1.

Mr. Slavin also suggested that an officer needs to go to the Council's vote to ask in person why Friendship Heights was the only TMD to have this program cut.